

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 465

To provide for the establishment of a tsunami hazard mitigation program
for all United States insular areas.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 1, 2005

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Resources

A BILL

To provide for the establishment of a tsunami hazard
mitigation program for all United States insular areas.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) Tsunamis are very large ocean waves caused
6 by underwater earthquakes or volcanic eruptions,
7 which can travel thousands of miles in open water.

8 (2) Tsunamis are threats to insular areas, espe-
9 cially in the Pacific because of its earthquake-prone
10 perimeter.

1 (3) Local tsunamis give residents only a few
2 minutes to seek safety.

3 (4) Tsunamis originating in one place give resi-
4 dents of distant localities more time to evacuate po-
5 tentially-threatened areas, but better data is needed
6 to accurately predict their potential to inflict damage
7 in any given area.

8 (5) False tsunami alerts can result in signifi-
9 cant costs to several communities, and reduce the se-
10 riousness with which future alerts will be taken.

11 (6) The failure to issue tsunami alerts can be
12 even more costly and can result in avoidable death
13 and personal injury, as well as destruction of prop-
14 erty.

15 (7) Once a tsunami occurs, the technology ex-
16 ists to analyze seismic changes in the Earth and
17 changes in ocean water height to determine the di-
18 rection any given tsunami is traveling and the popu-
19 lated areas in which it may cause destruction.

20 (8) The key steps to reducing damage caused
21 by tsunamis are to assess the hazard, educate the
22 public to the hazard, monitor the Earth's seismic ac-
23 tivity on a real-time basis, and alert local govern-
24 ments and the public in time for them to take ap-
25 propriate action.

1 **SEC. 2. PROGRAM.**

2 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The National Oceanic and
3 Atmospheric Administration shall establish a tsunami haz-
4 ard mitigation program for all United States insular areas
5 to perform hazard assessment, monitoring and warning,
6 and public education functions. Such program shall—

7 (1) provide warnings of tsunamis, and maintain
8 the equipment necessary to make such warnings;

9 (2) conduct periodic tests of the tsunami warn-
10 ing system to ensure its operational effectiveness;

11 (3) make tsunami warnings available to the
12 broadest extent practicable;

13 (4) establish a long-term plan to determine
14 areas of possible inundation for all reasonably
15 threatened insular areas of the United States;

16 (5) coordinate the preparation of local evacu-
17 ation plans for susceptible communities; and

18 (6) coordinate with and maintain membership
19 in the International Tsunami Information Center.

20 (b) PRIMARY BENEFICIARIES.—The Program estab-
21 lished under subsection (a) shall be designed for the ben-
22 efit of all insular areas of the United States, including
23 American Samoa, Guam, the United States Virgin Is-
24 lands, Puerto Rico, and the Commonwealth of the North-
25 ern Marianas Islands.